



HEQC

CHE

**A Good Practice Guide and Self-evaluation
Instruments for Managing the Quality of
Service-Learning**



JET EDUCATION
SERVICES

June 2006

Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC)

**A Good Practice Guide and
Self-evaluation Instruments
for Managing the Quality of
Service-Learning**

A Good Practice Guide and Self-evaluation Instruments for Managing the Quality of Service-Learning

Published by:
The Council on Higher Education
Didacta Building
211 Skinner Street
Pretoria
South Africa

PO Box 13354
The Tramshed
0126
South Africa

Tel. +27 12 392 9132
Fax. +27 12 392 9120
Website: <http://www.che.ac.za>

ISBN: 1-919856-56-0
Date of Publication: June 2006

Material from this publication cannot be reproduced without the CHE's permission.
© Council on Higher Education, Pretoria

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This *Good Practice Guide* is the product of research undertaken through the JET-CHESP Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Programme between 2001 and 2005. The programme generated extensive data from close to 200 credit-bearing modules (courses) that incorporated the principles and practice of service-learning. Collectively, these modules included 39 different academic disciplines and almost 7 000 students ranging from first year to Master's level. The HEQC and JET would like to acknowledge the contributions of:

The Ford Foundation who, through their funding of the JET-CHESP initiative, made it possible to conduct the research that led to the publication of this Guide.

The numerous academic staff who generated the research data required to develop this Guide.

Prof. Johan Mouton and Ms Lauren Wildschut, for conducting the external evaluation of pilot service-learning modules, which contributed to generating the indicators contained in this Guide.

Dr Mabel Erasmus, Prof. Piet Erasmus, Prof. Johnnie Hay, Ms Mary Purcell, Ms Ielse Seale and Dr Louis van der Westhuizen, for the design and pilot testing of the indicators and self-assessment instruments contained in this Guide.

Prof. Ahmed Bawa, Prof. Bob Bringle, Prof. Sherril Gelmon, Prof. George Subotsky and Dr Nick Taylor, who served as advisors to the JET-CHESP Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Programme.

Mr Josef Lazarus, who coordinated the JET-CHESP Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Programme and the development of this Guide.

PREFACE

The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) is mandated by the Higher Education Act of 1997 to operate a quality assurance system that focuses on the accreditation of higher education programmes and on the audit of the quality management systems of higher education institutions (HEIs). Also included in the mandate of the HEQC are quality promotion and building the capacity of the higher education system, institutions and individuals to respond to the HEQC's quality requirements.

As part of fulfilling its mandate, the HEQC actively promotes discussion and debate about quality issues – especially in relation to the core functions of HEIs: teaching, research and community engagement – and these activities are located within the directorate of Quality Promotion and Capacity Development. The directorate takes responsibility for conceptualising and managing a number of activities and research projects with the participation of HEIs, research specialists and organisations involved in and concerned with higher education.

This Good Practice Guide on service-learning is one of several publications that the HEQC, in collaboration with JET Education Services (formerly Joint Education Trust), is devoting to community engagement in South African higher education. The other publications include: *Service-Learning in the Curriculum: A Resource for Higher Education Institutions*; *Service-Learning in the Disciplines: Lessons from the Field*; and *Perspectives on Community Engagement in Higher Education*.

The HEQC included community engagement in its work not only because community engagement is a core function of higher education but also because of the potential of community engagement to advance social development and social transformation agendas in higher education. HEIs vary widely in the way they locate and give effect to community engagement in their missions, and various approaches to and organisation of community engagement have emerged in South Africa. This publication focuses on one aspect of community engagement: service-learning. The publication benefits from the contributions of local and international specialists in terms of their different experiences of the practice of and approaches to service-learning in higher education.

The HEQC hopes that this publication will encourage debate and reflection among HEIs, and facilitate dialogue between HEIs and their stakeholders about the conceptualisation, role and organisation of community engagement within higher education in South Africa.

Dr Mala Singh
Executive Director
Higher Education Quality Committee
June 2006

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
PREFACE	v
FOREWORD	ix
LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES AND FORMS	x
ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS	xi
INTRODUCTION:	
THE HEQC's QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM	1
THE SERVICE-LEARNING PRIORITIES OF THE HEQC	5
From: <i>Criteria for Institutional Audits</i>	5
From: <i>Criteria for Programme Accreditation</i>	6
GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE FOR MANAGING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE-LEARNING	7
Purpose of the Guide and Intended Target Audience	7
Using the Guide	7
Implementing the Guide	8
Scope	8
Evaluative Stages and Institutional Levels for Managing the Quality of Service-Learning	9
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE-LEARNING	11
Community Engagement	11
A Typology of Student Community Engagement	13
Service-Learning	16
GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES: RECOMMENDED INDICATORS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR MANAGING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE-LEARNING	21
Institutional Level Guidelines	21
Institutional Input	21
Institutional Process	23
Institutional Output and Impact	24
Institutional Review	24

Faculty/ School Level Guidelines	25
Faculty/ School Input	25
Faculty/ School Process	26
Faculty/ School Output and Impact	27
Faculty/ School Review	27
Programme/ Qualification Level Guidelines	28
Programme Input	28
Programme Process	29
Programme Output and Impact	30
Programme Review	30
Module/Course Level Guidelines	30
Module Input	30
Module Process	31
Module Output and Impact	32
Module Review	32
SELF-EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS FOR MANAGING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE-LEARNING	33
Institutional Level Self-evaluation of Service-Learning	33
Faculty/ School Level Self-evaluation of Service-Learning	47
Programme/ Qualification Level Self-evaluation of Service-Learning	57
Module/ Course Level Self-evaluation of Service-Learning	65
REFERENCES	81
LIST OF USEFUL SERVICE-LEARNING RESOURCES AND WEBSITES	83

FOREWORD

Since the release in 1997 of the White Paper on higher education, South African HEIs have explored new models for community engagement that improve their capacity to fulfil their institutional missions and create opportunities to contribute to the transformation of South African society. Implementing and institutionalising service-learning are among the most important activities that HEIs undertake to improve community engagement. When understood and applied correctly, community engagement and service-learning constitute serious academic work that enhances the most fundamental educational purposes: building knowledge. Assessing this work should be approached with the same seriousness.

This *Good Practice Guide* is a critical resource for developing the capacity of South African HEIs to manage the quality of service-learning at an institutional, faculty, programme and module level. The *Good Practice Guide* builds upon previous models and procedures for assessing service-learning and provides a set of tools that constitute a sound strategy for systematically monitoring accomplishments and improving practice at various levels. When the assessment of the quality of community engagement and service-learning is approached seriously, it will broaden conversations on campus and promote accountability for academic and societal outcomes. In South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, this is pioneering work that will evolve and develop over time. Thus, practitioners must assume responsibility for informing others – in South Africa and across the world – how to improve these approaches so that we, together, can build a knowledge base that becomes the scholarship of transformation.

Prof. Robert G. Bringle
Director, Center for Service and Learning
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, USA

Bob Bringle is one of the leading scholars on community engagement and service-learning and has written extensively in the field. One of his primary research interests is the assessment of community engagement and service-learning.

LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES AND FORMS

Figure 1:	Types of Community Engagement	13
Figure 2:	Distinctions among Student Community Engagement Programmes	14
Table 1:	Courses participating in JET's research	18
Table 2:	Number and level of students participating in JET's research	18

SELF-EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Institutional Level	35
Faculty/School Level	49
Programme/ Qualification Level	59
Summary of academic and support staff involvement in the service-learning module	69
Module/ Course Level	70